

Neil Millikin, D.D.S.

INFORMED CONSENT (for dental sealants)

Patient's name _____ Date _____

Dental Sealants (SEALS)

Sealants are helping to create a generation of youngsters that are nearly cavity-free. Statistics show that one out of every three children between the ages of 5 and 17 has never had a cavity. Dental professionals attribute water fluoridation and use of sealants with helping to bring about this rapid decline in cavities.

A plastic-like coating, called pit and fissure sealant, is applied to the chewing surface of the back teeth and to indentations and nicks in the teeth's surfaces. It is a preventive measure to ward off decay that tends to settle into hidden crevices in the teeth.

Procedures: To apply the sealant, the tooth enamel is treated with a mild acid solution that etches the surface of the tooth, killing bacteria and causing the tooth to be temporarily porous and somewhat rough. The liquid sealant, clear or milky white in color, is applied and allowed to harden. Within a few days, the excess plastic wears off, leaving the sealant only in the pits and fissures.

Benefits: Food and bacteria collect in any pits and fissures of teeth that are not sealed. This eventually weakens the tooth and causes decay. Studies have shown that over 90% of biting surface pits and fissures will eventually decay if left untreated. Sealants are also employed to good effect in temporarily prolonging the life of old fillings where replacement with a new filling or placement of a crown/onlay is intended, but delay is necessary for some reason.

Common Risks: The use of sealants does not eliminate the need for regular attention to dental care. You still must brush and floss, and pay attention to the amount and frequency of sugary foods you eat. Although the plastic covering may last for many years, it must be checked periodically for flaws and may need to be reapplied if damage appears over time. If active decay is noted during the procedure, a sealant may not be possible, and an appropriate alternative treatment may be recommended.

Alternatives: In cases where decay is not yet evident, the only alternative is to leave the tooth "as is", and monitor it closely to see if decay develops.

Consequences of not performing these procedures: Statistics show that most teeth will decay if not sealed. While some people have a higher rate of decay progression, it is not possible to accurately predict how quickly or how severely this decay will progress. Bacteria inside untreated pits and fissures can cause the overall decay rate to increase in your mouth, and may lead to decay in other teeth as well.

Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that your Sealant are completed properly, although it is not possible to guarantee perfect results. By signing below, you acknowledge that you have received adequate information about the proposed procedures, that you understand this information, and that all of your questions have been answered fully. You also give permission for photographs or other information derived from your treatment to be used in clinical and economic research, practice marketing, and patient education activities and materials, provided that your identity is not reasonably discernible.

___ I give my consent for the proposed Sealant procedures as described above.

___ I refuse to give my consent for the proposed Sealant procedures as described above. I have been informed of the potential consequences of my decision to refuse treatment.

Patient's (or Parent's) signature / Date

Staff signature / Date

